



Choices 4 All

Harrow

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Choices is a not for profit charity which teaches employability and independent living skills to people with a learning difficulty with a view to getting the students into sustainable employment. The age of our students ranges from 17 years to mid forties with the average around the mid to high twenties.

In the last quarter of 2008, we purchased a 32-handset voting system from Interactive Education to be used for 2 primary purposes:

1. To obtain feedback from the students regards what they thought about the learning programme, tutors, environment, etc; and
2. To assess understanding by the students of particular points while they were being taught.

From their first use, it was obvious that the handsets and the voting system was a big hit with our students.

Their first use was to get feedback and views about Choices from a student group of about 25 students. The vast majority of the students immediately got the hang of how to use the handsets. Others took a little time but with assistance from their peers were soon able to join in. Some did not really get the idea at all but again with assistance from peers were able to answer all the students.

About 24 questions were asked in all which took about 1.25 hours but things speeded up as the student group (and the tutor) became more familiar with the equipment. What was particularly liked was not only being actively involved but also being able to see the results of one's input through presentation of the voting results. This unearthed a sense of competition amongst the students especially when they were given time to think about their answer and then 'voting was opened' and students tried to be the first to see their handset number shown as having voted on the screen. This competition is not always evident among the student group thus making this piece of equipment an extremely good educational and motivational tool.

Once the 'official' review had been completed, the students wanted to do more 'voting' and so we went through the demonstration slide packs, about 6 in all. These question sessions were different because they consisted of questions to which there was either a right or wrong answer (unlike the feedback review) and this brought forth an even more competitive nature from the students who showed very audibly and visibly their enjoyment of getting a question right

Overall, this proved to be a very instructive yet very enjoyable training session because not only did we get very good feedback information but also because it gave the students a sense of personal achievement as well as peer achievement.

